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PARADE'S SPECIAL

Intelligence Report

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More on "Mongoose"

Robert Maheu, who worked for the Central Intelligence Agency and the mysterious Howard Hughes, reveals how he served as a matchmaker between the CIA and the Mafia in a new book, *Next to Hughes*, coming April 22 from HarperCollins and co-authored by Richard Hack.

Maheu says he recruited the mobsters Sam Giancana and Johnny Roselli in 1960 to help with a secret CIA plot to shoot Fidel Castro, his brother Raúl and the Cuban revolutionary leader Che Guevara. The plot was linked to "Operation Mongoose," the covert name for the Bay of Pigs invasion—which some, in turn, have linked to the murder of JFK.

The CIA wanted a gangland-style hit, writes Maheu, and decided to let the mobsters do it—taking advantage of their grudge against Castro for forcing them out of Havana's casinos. Giancana nixed the gunman plan as too dangerous, however, and suggested poison instead. CIA chemists then concocted a "capsule the size of a pea, which released botulism into any liquid," says Maheu. He passed the pills to Giancana and Roselli, who were to hand them over to a Cuban contact.

But someone got cold feet, so "Castro never drank his mickey," concludes Maheu—who, at 74, is one of the few people still alive who knows the inside story of Operation Mongoose.

Robert Maheu: Secrets he told about CIA